

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Transportation Cabinet to honor the life and
2 memory of Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Richard Whitt by erecting signs on United
3 States Highway 23 in Greenup County that read "Home of 1978 Pulitzer Prize Winner
4 Richard Whitt."

5 WHEREAS, Richard Whitt was born in Greenup County, was the youngest of six
6 kids, and spent the first eight years of his life living in a tarpaper shack with no running
7 water or electricity; and

8 WHEREAS, Richard Whitt's father was a railroad worker and when he died, his
9 mother went to work in a shoe factory in Portsmouth, Ohio; and

10 WHEREAS, after graduating from McKell High School, Richard Whitt served in
11 the United States Navy for four years and then worked at an Ashland steel mill while
12 attending community college; and

13 WHEREAS, motivated by a desire to change the world, Richard Whitt pursued
14 journalism and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Kentucky, becoming
15 the first member of his family to graduate from college; and

16 WHEREAS, after college, Richard Whitt worked at the Middlesboro Daily News
17 for one year. Six months into the job, someone threatened his life and warned him not to
18 pursue a story. He realized that if he allowed himself to be intimidated, he would not be
19 able to perform his job with the required integrity; and

20 WHEREAS, Richard Whitt took as job as assistant state editor at the Waterloo
21 Daily Courier in Iowa, and later became assistant managing editor at the Kingsport
22 Times-News in Tennessee in 1972; and

23 WHEREAS, Richard Whitt always wanted to work for The Courier Journal and he
24 was given that opportunity in January 1977. Four months later the Beverly Hills Supper
25 Club burned and Richard Whitt's reporting on the incident and the aftermath led to
26 criminal investigations, the rewriting of the state's fire and safety laws, and the Pulitzer
27 Prize; and

1 WHEREAS, after receiving the Pulitzer Prize, Richard Whitt became chief of the
2 Frankfort Bureau, later working on the special projects unit of the paper; and

3 WHEREAS, Richard Whitt went on to work for the Atlanta Journal Constitution,
4 where he retired in 2006; and

5 WHEREAS, in addition to his 1978 Pulitzer Prize, Richard Whitt also received the
6 John Hancock Award in the early 1980s, was a finalist for the 1984 Pulitzer Prize and a
7 finalist for the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for a series on public service, received the 1988
8 Southern Journalism Award from the Institute of Southern Studies for a series on vote
9 fraud in Kentucky, and was inducted into the Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame in 1995;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Richard Whitt departed these earthly bounds on January 26, 2016, at
12 his home in Marietta, Georgia; and

13 WHEREAS, the General Assembly, both individually and collectively, honor the
14 life and accomplishments of Richard Whitt;

15 NOW, THEREFORE,

16 ***Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

17 ➡Section 1. The Transportation Cabinet shall erect signs on United States
18 Highway 23 in Greenup County, in front of McKell Middle School that read "Home of
19 1978 Pulitzer Prize Winner Richard Whitt," and shall, within 30 days of the effective date
20 of this Resolution, erect the appropriate signage.